

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION – Performance Plan

November 2011

Contribution to Montgomery County Results:

- Greater Responsiveness and Accountability
- Healthy and Sustainable Communities
- Preparing Children to Live and Learn
- Ensuring Vital Living for All

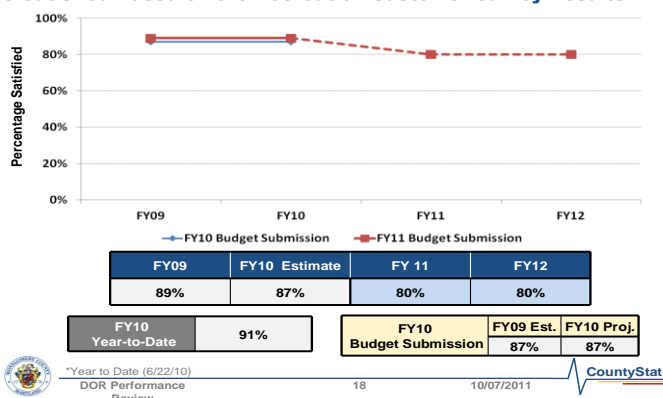
Contribution of the Department or Recreation:

What MRCD Does and for Whom	How Much
<p>Overall</p> <p>The mission of the Montgomery County Department of Recreation is to provide high quality, diverse and accessible programs, services and facilities that enhance the quality of life for all ages, cultures, and abilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY'11 Budget: \$25,896,670 • 61% Personnel Costs • 39% Operating costs • Approved Personnel Complement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 career positions - 360.7 work years
<p>Aquatics</p> <p>The <i>Aquatics</i> programs provide recreational, fitness, instructional, competitive, therapeutic, and rehabilitative water activities that serve all residents. The Department operates seven regional outdoor pools, as well as four indoor aquatics facilities, and a neighborhood spray park. The indoor pools serve the public 17 hours each day, 7 days a week, approximately 340 days a year. The outdoor pools and the spray park operate from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5,404,980 (20% of budget) • 133.6 WY • 2,234,904 visits to aquatics facilities
<p>Camps, Classes, Sports, Therapeutic Recreation</p> <p>Over 50 <i>camps</i> are provided for children ages 4-13, which are fun, safe, convenient, and affordable. Extended hours provide parents with opportunities to have children cared for both before and after camps. Holiday camps are offered during the winter and spring school breaks. The <i>Classes</i> program offers recreational and skill development classes to young people and adults. Leisure classes are scheduled and advertised four times each year in arts, crafts, exercise, music, performing and social dance, sports instruction, and special interest areas.</p> <p>The <i>Sports</i> program administers and delivers extensive programs in adult sports, and selects youth leagues throughout the County. The Therapeutic Recreation staff plan and provide accessible leisure, educational and personal skill development activities for individuals with disabilities through mainstreaming/community integration and adaptive programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,441,550 (9 % of budget) • 40.3 WY • Over 2,000 classes offered with 25,000 registrants • 81 camps/clinics with 11,000 registrants • 3,459 Therapeutic Recreation registrants
<p>Recreation Regions: Community Centers, Youth programs, Summer Fun Centers, and Teens</p> <p>The Department's 19 community recreation centers are located within the four recreation regions: Down County, Up County, East County, and Mid County. Certain types of programs are managed regionally to best serve the unique needs in their communities, including Youth Sports, Teen Programming, and Summer Fun Centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$8,383,540 (32% of budget) • 127.9 WY • 20 facilities • 1,299,619 visits to Centers
<p>Seniors</p> <p><i>Seniors</i> offers services for adults age 55 and above which include four senior centers, neighborhood programs, classes, sports and fitness, trips, and special programs for frail and isolated seniors. Senior Centers are open five to six days per week and provide social, physical, recreation, educational, and community oriented activities. Senior neighborhood programs serve groups of 20-70 individuals who meet in recreation centers near their homes one to three days each week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$ 1,366,520 (5% of budget) • 27.7 WY • 16,800 Senior participants

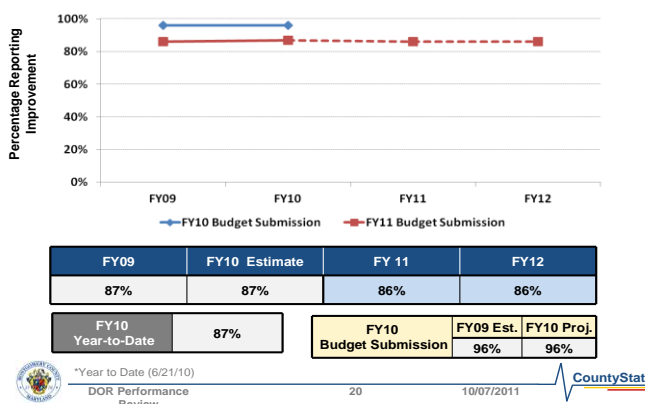
<p>Management Services: <i>The Management Services team</i> provides administrative support functions such as finance, budgeting, personnel, and contracting for the Recreation Department. In addition, it houses the department's Automation and Technology functions which include phones, PC's, and printers for 39 facilities, and 15 computer labs within the community recreation and senior centers. Management Services staff manages the customer service window and registration phone/fax lines for all department programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$ 1,628,440 (6% of budget) • 10.3 WY • 30% increase in financial assistance provided to customers
<p>Recreation Outreach Services: The Recreation Outreach Services Team is responsible for coordinating special events and other activities which offer a variety of benefits including enhancing a sense of community, encouraging family participation, and providing a positive image for the County. These special events offer opportunities for interaction among the various segments of our multi-cultural community and provide a chance to celebrate our rich cultural diversity. Furthermore, this team partners with many County and outside agencies and organizations to provide various leisure opportunities for the residents of the County. More formal partnerships include the Friends of Recreation, Arts and Humanities Council, Public Arts Trust, and BlackRock Center for the Arts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$570,810 (2% of budget) • 12.6 WY
<p>Administration/Policy Management ,Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement (PLAR), and Fixed Costs <i>The Administration/Policy Management</i> staff provides the management and supervisory oversight for direction, policy development, accountability, evaluation, planning, training, personnel/payroll, budget and fiscal matters, the CIP projects, and technology improvements. This team includes the Department's senior managers who also support the work of the Advisory Boards. <i>PLAR</i> provides funding for a lifecycle replacement program to protect the Department's investment in facilities and equipment, and to sustain efficient and reliable facility operations. <i>Fixed Costs</i> include costs associated with utilities, property insurance, workers' compensation insurance and grants to the cities of Gaithersburg and Takoma Park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin. Policy Mgt \$1,535,910 (5% of budget) • 8.9 WY • Includes newly added Marketing staff person • PLAR \$494,140 (1.9% of budget) • 0.9 WY • Fixed cost \$4,134,790 (15.9% of budget)

Performance Measures

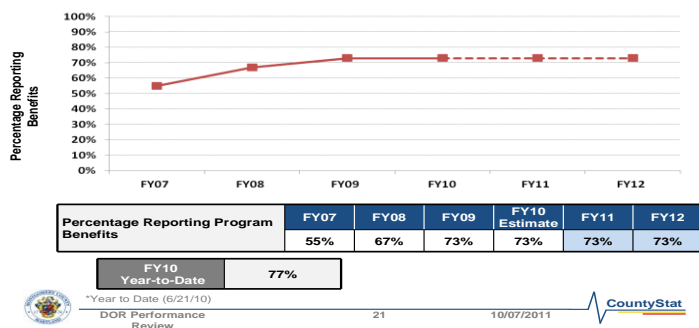
Headline Measure 1: Percent of Customers Who Report That They are Satisfied Based on the Recreation Customer Survey Results



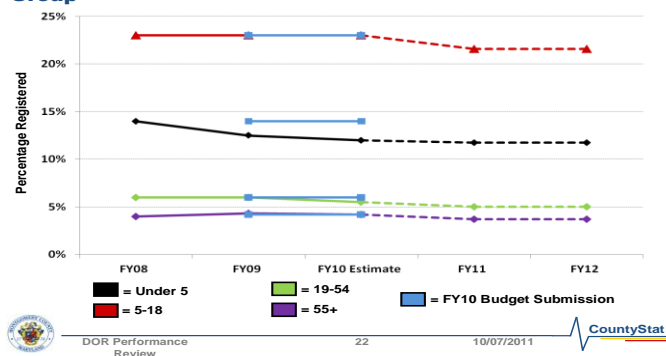
Headline Measure 2: Percent of Participants Who Reported Improved Well-being Based on Customer Survey Results



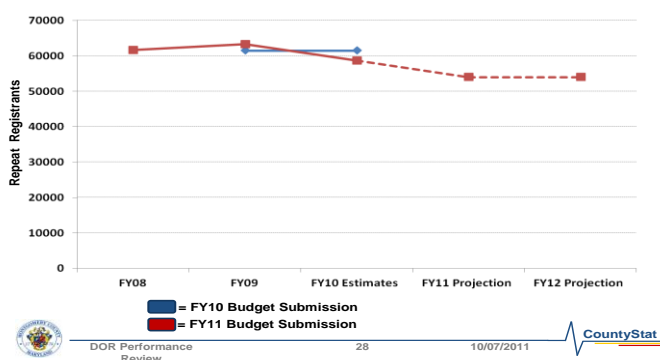
Headline Measure #3: Percent of Youth Registered in Positive Youth Development Programs Who Report Program Participation Benefits



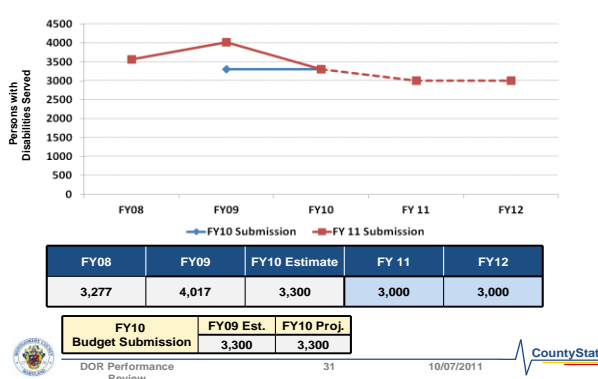
Headline Measure #4: Percentage of County Residents Registered Through the Department of Recreation by Age Group



Headline Measure #5: Total Number of Repeat Registrants in Department of Recreation Programs (Total)



Headline Measure #6: Total Number of People with Disabilities Served by the Therapeutic Recreation Team



¹ These results may be incomplete, as they only reflect programs that are administered through CLASS Software Solutions (CLASS) – the Department's registration database. Not all programs utilize CLASS currently, and several have only been added in the last few years

The Story Behind the Performance

Contributing Factors:

Accessible and Affordable Programs/Services

- Community recreation is available for County residents of all age groups and abilities.
- The number of customers who return to our programs and services continues to grow. By in large participants report having enjoyable experiences.
- The Department offers over 6,000 programs and services annually.

Accessible Facilities

- The Recreation Department operates 34 facilities across the County that are open 12-17 hours per day, 340 days per year. The facilities are located in most regions of the County.
- Our facilities offer activities that provide skill development, physical enhancement and relaxation, as well as cultural and social opportunities. In addition to Recreation Department programming, our facilities are rented out to county citizens for events such as community meetings, workshops, trainings, community events, and social gatherings.

Programs Built to Meet the Needs

- Our county is seeing a growing senior citizen population, more at-risk youth, and an increased awareness in serving individuals with special needs. The Department is flexible in its program offering and can adjust to meet demand as needed by adding, eliminating, or modifying programs in a timely fashion.
- Programs are also available in locations beyond Recreation operated facilities. They are also carried out in schools, civic buildings, and Parks facilities. This allows the Department to reach citizens that may not have a Recreation facility close to their home.

Leveraging Resources through Partnerships

- Despite a decrease of over 24% of the Department's operating budget and a loss of 28% of its career workforce positions, and 70% of its management, the Department has been able to mostly sustain and in some cases grow program participation levels through partnerships with a number of community based organizations as well as private and public partners.
- The Department is now actively seeking partnerships to continue to carry out programs and offers in-kind contributions of space and staff support.
- The Department has secured over \$400,000 in grants to enhance core programming elements.

Dedicated and Flexible Staff

- In an effort to sustain program levels and quality, the Department has gone through four significant staff re-organizations. This has been disruptive and difficult, but staff has maintained a strong and professional dedication to carrying its assignments, despite having fewer resources and in many cases taking on workloads left by staff no longer with the Department.

Restricting Factors:

Staffing and Budget Challenges

- To absorb budget reductions, the Department has eliminated 28% of its career workforce, 70% of its managers and gone through four significant re-organizations. Staff is now juggling multiple assignments in an effort to sustain programs. This has impacted our ability to meet customer needs in a timely fashion.
- The Department is understaffed at recreation centers where we are usually forced to staff facilities with only one staff member. Facilities regularly have multiple programs running at the same time and with only one staff member on duty this creates the potential for poor customer service and raises safety concerns.
- The Department competes poorly with other industries on wages and therefore finds it difficult to find quality and dedicated seasonal staff.
- Programs for youth and individuals with special needs require a low participant to staff ratio and current staffing does not meet demand.

- The Department has reduced the operating budget of many of its programs. For example, the Sports Academies programs are now offering fewer trips, have lowered the amount of food given during programs, and increased the participant to staff ration from 10 to 1 to 15 to 1.
- In an effort to sustain programming, the Department has mostly eliminated administrative support positions. This has begun to impact customer service negatively because of the slower turnaround time on important administrative and customer service functions.

Revenue Requirement

- The \$11.5 million revenue requirement from the County along with the Recreation Department's internal revenue model to meet this requirement provides a barrier to service. We are continually faced with making program and service decisions based on the ability to "make our revenue" instead of doing what is necessary to provide quality programs, services, and abilities for all areas of the county. The result is disproportionate programming for those that can afford them and often leaves out those that can't.

Communication and Marketing

- We often hear "I didn't know that program existed." The Department relies mainly on its Recreation Guide for mass marketing of its services and facilities. There is too much information to include in the Guide, especially community based programs located in the centers and schools. Therefore, many of our programs are not promoted effectively, which results in lost revenue opportunities.

Competition and Other Barriers to Service

- There is increasing competition for our customer's discretionary income and leisure time from private providers such as private sports associations, gyms, other agencies, etc. This has been compounded by the economic recession.
- Transportation issues and day care challenges are barriers to county residents accessing services and programs. This disproportionately has an effect on County residents in lower economic categories.
- Over 70% of youth in Montgomery County are now coming home to households with both parents working. This has increased the need for out-of-school time opportunities for youth. To meet demand, the Department will create more out-of-school time opportunities at Recreation Centers, which will result in the displacement or cancellation of some activities and services.

Facility challenges:

- Facilities and equipment, especially as they continue to age, are expensive to maintain because of high multiple uses as well as the issue of facilities that were not originally designed to serve as recreation centers (i.e. Ross Body was originally a school).
- Renovation and modernization and new costs are growing at a higher pace than the County's ability to pay these costs. As facilities continue to age, deferred maintenance becomes a critical issue.
- Despite an increase in facilities and wear and tear on equipment, the Department has reduced its PLAR fund, to accommodate budget reductions, by 20% going into FY'12.
- The reductions to the Department of General Services have had severely impacted operations. Due to the reduction in preventive maintenance, systems are failing more regularly. The reduction in interior and exterior facility maintenance has also negatively impacted programming.

What We Propose to Do to Improve Performance

Increase Engagement of County Residents

The Department will continually engage County residents to determine if their interests are being met and stay ahead of demand. This will be done through the administering of surveys at Recreation facilities and programs. To ensure that it is reaching residents that are not accessing services the Department will also administer surveys at other government facilities, private businesses, and through media outlets. Lastly, the Department will host annual community forums to establish dialogue with residents regarding their interests and needs.

Improve Marketing and Communication

The Department was appropriated funds to hire a Marketing Manager to assist with the Development of a comprehensive marketing and communications plan for the Department. However, that position has been caught in the hiring freeze. The Department has been able to successfully demonstrate that the additional staff position and increased marketing will lead to greater revenue opportunities.

In the short term, the Department will increase its grass roots marketing efforts and make better and more coordinated use of its current communications tools such as the web-site, Destination Recreation (the monthly 15 minute Recreation segment on Montgomery Cable).

In addition, the Department is hiring a contractor to upgrade the look and improve the navigation of its web-site. Through recent surveys and registration information, the Department has learned that over 67% of its registrations are now occurring on-line. This represents a 30% increase over the last two years. The improved web-site will serve as an important tool to increase revenues and improve customer service.

Sustain and Where Possible, Increase Out-of-School Time Opportunities for Youth such as Excel Beyond the Bell

The Department will continue to collaborate with other agencies, MCPS, community based organizations and others to establish a continuum of services for youth, especially in target areas. The Department's role in this continuum will be to establish more recreation based programming that offers youth a safe and well supervised environment to play in both structured and unstructured activities. The partnerships will allow the Department to add components such as case management, academic assistance, and other social services. The Department will utilize its existing resources and adjust programming at facilities to offer more out-of-school time programming particularly during 3 to 6pm during the school year and in the summer. To date, these efforts have been credited with assisting in the reduction of juvenile crime in targeted areas by as much as 12%.

Increase More Recreation Opportunities for People with Disabilities

The Department will partner with private providers and community based organizations to create more programming opportunities for people with disabilities, by utilizing the staff of these organizations and space at facilities provided by the Department. The Department will utilize existing resources to create more opportunities such as a sports league for people with disabilities.

Sustain or Where Possible, Create More Targeted Opportunities for Seniors

The Department has established a task force to evaluate its current program offering for seniors and establish more targeted programming to baby boomers. The Department will partner with other agencies, provide providers, and others expand programming for all seniors and create more recreation opportunities throughout the year.

Appendix A: Budget

The Department has been able to identify over \$200,000 in savings within its FY'11 budget mark by reprinting the seasonal Parks and Recreation Guide in a different format. The savings will be used to execute the marketing strategy that the Department feels will increase revenue opportunities by as much as 5% in the first year. 5% additional revenue equates to over \$600,000 that can be used to offset reductions and round out the department's budget. All other budget recommendations will involve reductions to comply with savings marks.

Appendix B: Implementation

Develop a 2030 Vision and 10 Year Strategic Plan

Focus groups and surveys will be administered to customers and non-customers from January - April 2010. The Department will partner with the Parks Department to host a Visioning and Planning session with County residents in March. The process will also include a comprehensive inventory of all Parks and Recreation assets and services. The plan will be completed by December 2010.

Increase Engagement of County Residents

Through the strategic planning process, there have been over 25 constituencies identified to establish focus groups and engage both users and non-users of County recreation facilities. This engagement will occur primarily from January - April 2011.

Improve Marketing and Communication

The Department has developed a marketing plan that it will begin executing in the summer of 2010. Through increased marketing and public relations, the Department feels that it can increase its revenues by up to 5%, a \$600,000 increase over the previous year. The Department is updating its web-site in March 2010 to improve ease of access, aesthetics, and stream line information. This will lead to improve customer service and increase program participation.

Sustain and Where Possible, Increase Out-of-School Time Opportunities for Youth

The Department has partnered with over 40 organizations to carry out programming throughout the County. The Department is strategically selecting reductions that will minimize impact on youth participation. Where possible, partnerships will help to sustain programs or in some cases grow programs. This will occur throughout the school year and carry into the summer.

Increase More Recreation Opportunities for People with Disabilities

The Department has partnered with over 12 organizations to carry out programs for participants with disabilities. The department is also concentrating its programming efforts in target areas and demographics to maximize program opportunities and assist participants that have few other recreation options. This will be carried out throughout the year.

Sustain or Where Possible, Create More Targeted Opportunities for Seniors

The Department is a lead agency in the County Executive's Senior Initiative. This has opened new possibilities for collaboration and is allowing the Department to leverage its resources to sustain and in some cases enhance programming. The Department is also offering programs that have a greater degree of cost recovery that will allow for the increase of some program components. The Department is also taking better advantage of its existing resources within facilities and sharing staff to increase programs. These strategies will be carried out throughout the year,

Appendix C: Data Development Agenda

Measure #2: Number of people with disabilities served by the Therapeutic Recreation team:

- This measure will continue to be refined, so that we can better identify who we are serving, and what type of service is being provided.
- This will be divided into 3-4 measures:
 - Number of Therapeutic Recreation programs by age
 - Percentage of Therapeutic Recreation programs filled
 - Number of department registrants who are provided with an accommodation: mainstream companion, interpreter, listening devices, adaptive equipment

Measure #4: Percentages of youth participating in positive youth development programs:

- The data from the Sports Academy and Rec Extra surveys will continue to be collected; however, we would like to find a way to include more students in the survey process.
- Develop other methods that will help illustrate the positive impact that these out of school programs have on the participants.
- Use the Teen survey model and expand it to include other youth programs through out the department such as our elementary after school programs in our Community Centers and youth aquatic programs.

Measure #5 and #6: The surveys: The percentage of customers who report they are satisfied, and the percentage of customers who report or demonstrate improved well being:

- Establish a follow up system for customers who want to be contacted.
- Provide incentives such as pool passes or a reduced program registration.

New measure or sub measure:

- We would like to work with County Stat to establish a new measure or sub measure and data analysis that would help us better count facility utilization.